



Canadian Friends
Service Committee
(QUAKERS)
www.quakerservice.ca

"We are moved by the sufferings of the Palestinian and Israeli peoples. This suffering has gone on too long and must not be allowed to continue." - Canadian Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, 2009 minute on Israel/Palestine

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON, K1A 0A2
Cc: Minister of Foreign Affairs Stephane Dion
Minister of International Development Marie-Claude Bibeau

April 2016

Dear Prime Minister Justin Trudeau,

Since 1948 the plight of Palestinian refugees has been a major issue facing the world community and one which The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) has been deeply moved by. The UN asked Quakers to support relief efforts for Palestinian refugees in the Gaza Strip in 1949, work which was ended when the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) was established in 1950. This agency was never intended to still be operating over 60 years later, however satisfactory resolution of the situation of Palestinian refugees does not appear to be in sight. At the same time, the living conditions for many Palestinian refugees, those in Gaza in particular, have declined dramatically. The UN reports that Gaza will be unlivable by 2020.¹

We are deeply disturbed by the lack of funding to support Palestinian refugees. We therefore ask that Canada resume funding UNRWA. We recognize that UNRWA does not offer a satisfactory lasting solution which the Palestinian refugees so desperately need and deserve. We therefore ask that Canada take a more serious look at the situation of Palestinian refugees and carefully examine all options available for engaging with them and assisting them.

In Friendship,

Lana Robinson
Clerk, Canadian Friends Service Committee (Quakers)

¹ *Gaza in 2020: A Liable Place?* (2012, August). United Nations country team in the occupied Palestinian territory. Retrieved April 4, 2016 from <http://www.unrwa.org/userfiles/file/publications/gaza/Gaza%20in%202020.pdf>